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**Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)**

**General and complete disarmament**

## Letter dated 17 February 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith, in my capacity as New York coordinator of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), the text of the Declaration of the Member States of OPANAL on the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), adopted in Mexico City on 14 February 2017 (see annex).

I would appreciate your assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 91 and 98.

(*Signed*) Mauro **Vieira**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

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## Annex to the letter dated 17 February 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Spanish]

## Declaration of the Member States of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean on the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)

The States of Latin America and the Caribbean, all of them parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), represented by their ministers for foreign affairs, meeting on 14 February 2017 in Mexico City, at the twenty-fifth session of the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco:

*Conscious* that Latin America and the Caribbean, at a complex political juncture that clearly showed the need for military denuclearization, was able to create an unprecedented treaty for international peace and security, which would guarantee the absence of nuclear weapons in the region and, at the same time, the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes, as is the case with research centres having, inter alia, medical and food components;

*Proud* of the historical responsibility of belonging to the "zone of peace", proclaimed for the first time in Latin America and the Caribbean by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, at its second summit, held in Havana on 29 January 2014;

*Recalling* their decision to contribute to the consolidation of peace based on the sovereign equality of States, on mutual respect and good-neighbourliness, on the peaceful settlement of disputes, on the non-use and non-threat of use of force, on the right to self-determination, on territorial integrity and on non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States;

*Reiterating* that militarily denuclearized zones do not constitute an end in themselves, but rather a highly relevant intermediary step towards the realization of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under effective international control;

*Reiterating their conviction* that the establishment of militarily denuclearized zones is closely related to the maintenance of peace and security in the respective regions and that the military denuclearization of vast geographical zones, adopted by the sovereign decision of the States comprised therein, has exercised a beneficial influence on other regions;

*Recalling* that the United Nations General Assembly, through its resolution 68/32, decided "to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in this regard";

*Recalling also* the commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September as part of the global efforts to achieve the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, and urging

Governments, parliaments and civil society to take additional measures each year to commemorate this date;

*Again emphasizing* that nuclear weapons, whose terrible effects are suffered, indiscriminately and inexorably, by military forces and civilian population alike, constitute, through the persistence of the radioactivity they release, an attack on the integrity of the human species and ultimately may even render the whole earth uninhabitable;

*Similarly recalling* the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo in 2013 and in Nayarit (Mexico) and Vienna in 2014, which confirmed that nuclear weapons constitute a threat to humankind, by their mere existence and by their possible use or threat of use, as well as by the potential damage that an accidental or intentional detonation could cause to global health, food security and climate, among other fields, and by the lack of capacity of the international community to face a humanitarian catastrophe of such a magnitude;

*Acknowledging also* the efforts being pursued in the multilateral context in order to identify and seek effective measures, the adoption of which will be necessary to establish and maintain a world without nuclear weapons;

*Reiterating* that, although nuclear-weapon States have the ultimate responsibility for eliminating their nuclear arsenals, it is the responsibility of all States to prevent the humanitarian impact and all effects of nuclear weapons;

*Reaffirming* that the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international humanitarian law, and constitute a crime against humanity;

*Also considering* that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their prohibition and elimination in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner, within clearly established time frames;

*Recalling* that the United Nations General Assembly, at its first session, adopted its first resolution, resolution 1(I), on 24 January 1946, which mainly addresses the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the elimination of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction;

*Celebrating* the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly, at its seventy-first session, of resolution 71/258, in which it decides, inter alia, "to convene in 2017 a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination";

*Highlighting* the unveiling of a commemorative plaque, on 18 November 2016, that reads "Here in Tijuana, the most north-western municipality of all Latin America, begins the nuclear-weapon-free zone of Latin America and the Caribbean, which extends to the farthest southern extreme of the continent. As established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1967, within this 80-million-square-kilometre region there are no nuclear weapons nor will there ever be";

*The States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, all of them members of OPANAL*:

1. *Reiterate their deep concern* over the existence of nuclear weapons, as it continues to be an imminent threat to the peace and security of our planet, and therefore *believe* it is in the interest of all that under no circumstances nuclear weapons be used again;

2. *Recall* the role of OPANAL as the "specialized body in the region for articulating common positions and joint actions on nuclear disarmament", as stated in the special declarations on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the Summits of the Community of Latin American and

Caribbean States held in Cuba in 2014, in Costa Rica in 2015 and in Ecuador in 2016;

3. *Reiterate*, pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, the legitimate interest of the non-nuclear-weapon States, among which all the States members of OPANAL are included, in receiving an unequivocal and legally binding guarantee of non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against them from nuclear-weapon States, and *also urge* that efforts be made towards negotiating and adopting, within the shortest possible time frame, a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances;

4. *Call on* nuclear-weapon States that have issued interpretative declarations on Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco that are contrary to the spirit of the Treaty to examine them, together with OPANAL, with the objective of revising or eliminating them, in order to provide full and unequivocal security assurances to the States forming the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to respect the militarily denuclearized character of the region;

5. *Emphasize* that nuclear-weapon-free zones promote peace and stability at the regional and international levels by prohibiting the possession, acquisition, development, testing, manufacturing, production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear weapons;

6. *Stress* that the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, has served as a source of inspiration for four other regions in the world, and *consider also* that the Treaty and OPANAL are an important endowment of the international community and a political, legal and institutional reference for the creation of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of agreements freely arrived at by the States of the regions concerned;

7. *Regret* the failure to fulfil the agreement to hold an international conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and *reiterate* that the convening of such a conference is an integral and important part of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[*] and therefore *call* for the convening of this conference as soon as possible, with the participation of all States in the Middle East, on the basis of agreements freely concluded between the States of the region concerned and with the full support and commitment of the nuclear-weapon States;

8. *Regret* the continued failure of nuclear-weapon States to comply with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and with the commitments emanating from the Review Conferences, and *regret also* that the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons concluded without the adoption of a final document;

9. *Condemn* the modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons, which is inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament, and, in this regard, *demand* the cessation by nuclear-weapon States of the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, as well as related infrastructures;

10. *Welcome* the commemoration, in July 2016, of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the agreements through which Argentina and Brazil confirmed their unequivocal commitment to the use of nuclear energy for strictly

[*] NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I), part I, p. 30, para. 7 (a).

peaceful purposes, thereby creating the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, and *highlight* that the successful experience of Argentina and Brazil has been recognized internationally and that it constitutes an example and source of inspiration for other regions around the world, particularly for those where nuclear-weapon-free zones do not yet exist;

11. *Stress* the importance of cooperation among the States parties to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk), which established nuclear-weapon-free zones, and Mongolia;

12. *Stress once more* that a world free of nuclear weapons is indispensable for the fulfilment of the principal aims of humankind, namely, peace, security and development, and therefore *consider* that the immediate action must be that all Member States of the United Nations actively participate in the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, convened in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/258.